

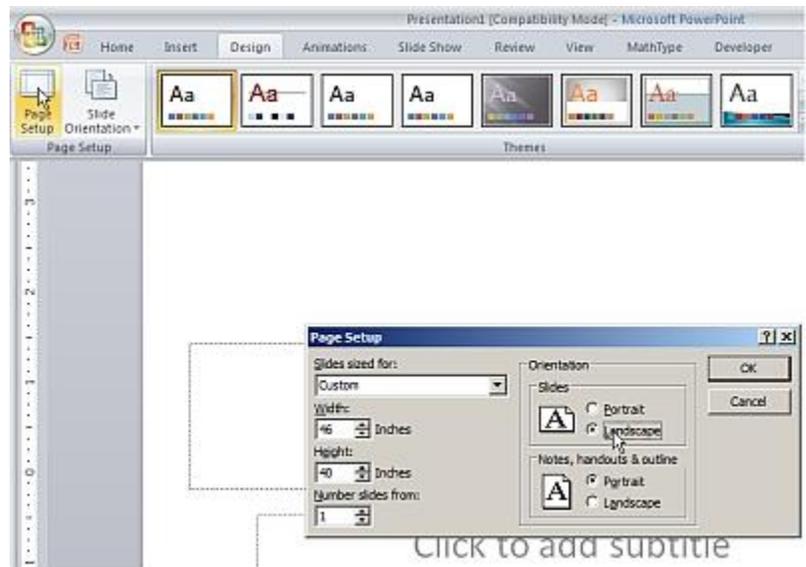
# Making a Poster Using the Large-Format Printer

## General Guidelines:

- Maximum height for the NCC Print Shop printer is 42"; maximum width is 90"
- Poster size for the Rall Symposium or the Summer Undergraduate Research Colloquium is 48"×36"
- For an off-campus conference, check the conference Web site or ask your advisor about poster size; they usually have very specific size limitations
- Construct your poster as a single PowerPoint slide
- Print the PowerPoint slide to a PDF file
- Upload your PDF to the NCC Print Shop using their online form
- Cost of printing (subject to change; price is current as of Spring 2015) is \$2.75 per square foot
- Allow at least a day or two for the poster to be printed.
- For heavy-use times like Rall and NCUR, the Print Shop will establish a specific deadline (usually a week or so in advance)
- Search “designing conference posters” to find an online site by Colin Purrington with extensive (!) suggestions on poster design (you can even upload a draft to get comments from others)

## Setting Up the Poster in PowerPoint:

- Open a new presentation
- Click **Design | Page Setup** to get the Page Setup dialog box (see screenshot)
- Set the desired width and height for your poster
- Most posters are wider than they are tall; if this is the case, choose **Landscape**
- The largest slide that PowerPoint will allow is 56" × 56"; if you need to make a larger poster, you will have to scale it down proportionately. For example, to make a 90" × 42" poster, you would have to set up a 45" × 21" PowerPoint slide.



- Click the title and subtitle boxes that PowerPoint inserts automatically and delete them.
- A very basic template that you can download and modify if you want can be found on the Biology web site.

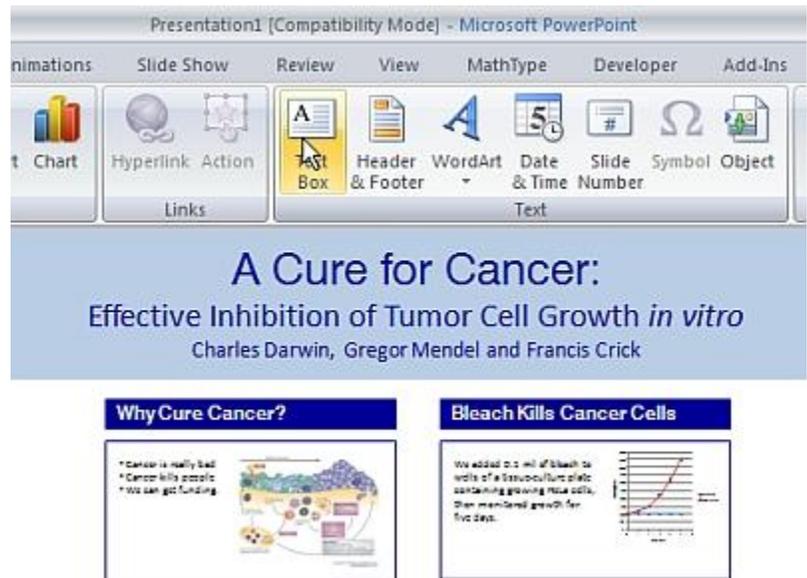
## Designing the Poster:

- Use text boxes (click **Insert | Text Box**) to add text to your poster.
- Remember that your poster needs a title, and that the authors' names should also be included. In addition to your own name, include your mentor or research advisor and anyone else who collaborated with you (on the *specific* work you are presenting).
- Hint: **Your poster should be readable from a distance!** As a guide, 72-point text will print about 1" high; a size between 108 and 144 points is good for a title, while a 48- to 60-point font is good for subheadings and body text between 24 and 36 points is readable from a good distance.

- Hint: **Don't use too much text!** No one is going to have time to read all the words on your poster. Remember, your audience should be able to read all of the important points from a distance.

- Copy and paste graphs, diagrams and photographs from other programs to tell your story, or use **Insert | Picture** to import a saved graphic. You can use PowerPoint's drawing tools (**Home | Shapes**) to draw a diagram directly on your slide or you can draw the diagram separately and import it.

- Hint: **Your poster should be visual!** Show your audience what you want them to see, rather than expecting them to read about it. You are not limited to the formal Introduction-Methods-Results-Discussion format of a scientific paper, so feel free, for example, to use a diagram to illustrate a method and then put a graph of the results right into the diagram. Focus on how to make it easy for the audience to understand your work.
- Use subheadings, boxes, lines and other visual tools (**Home | Shapes**) to make it easier for your audience to follow the flow of the poster and add visual interest.



## Printing the Poster:

- Be sure your poster is exactly the way you want it! Mistakes look pretty embarrassing in 36-point type. Proofread, proofread, proofread—then ask someone else to proofread it for you.
- To judge readability and visual effect, try printing the slide as big as possible on an 8½ × 11 sheet and/or projecting it on one of the classroom projectors. You may not be able to read all your text, but you will be able to get a good idea of how the poster looks overall.
- PowerPoint 2007 or later can directly save your presentation as a PDF file: use **Save As** and change the file type to **PDF**. *Make sure you saved it as a PowerPoint file first, so you can make changes later!*
- If you are using your own computer and you don't have Office 2007 or 2010, you will need to install a PDF printer driver. A free one that works very well (better, in fact, than the built-in conversion in Office) is PrimoPDF. After downloading and installing this program, when you choose to print your poster, one of your printer choices should be **PrimoPDF**. Print to that "printer" and choose a location in which to save your PDF file.
- Upload your PDF file to the Print Shop using their online form and you're all set!